

Whixall Parish Council

Chairman: Ian Mercer

**Minutes of Parish Council's Monthly Meeting held on Wednesday 10th January 2018 at
Whixall Social Centre starting at 7:30pm**

Present:

Chairman: I Mercer

Councillors: B Harris (Vice Chair), D Edgerton, J Hardiman, M Howard (joined the meeting after 7:30pm).

Shropshire Councillors: C Mellings, P Dee

Clerk: K Hatton

Members of the community: *Mr and Mrs McClaren, Mr and Mrs Cadman, S Grogan plus Ben Walker of Connecting Shropshire*

01/18 Introduction

Cllr Mercer declared the meeting open.

02/18 Apologies for absence

J Fitton, G Turnbull. (Letters of resignation received from J Spenser and S Marlow).

03/18 Presentation from Ben Walker of Connecting Shropshire: Update on recent works to improve Broadband in Whixall

Ben introduced himself and provided a brief summary of Connecting Shropshire and their objectives to provide access to faster broadband and invest public funding to areas where it is not commercially viable for companies to supply. He explained that they have contracts with *Openreach* and *Airband* (a wireless based system provider).

Ben supplied handouts with a summary update for Whixall to all present and stated that this was public information and can be shared. This information showed a map identifying planned and actual fibre optic coverage, Airband coverage and where there is not *currently* a plan to provide superfast broadband. It was also stated that Connecting Shropshire aspires to provide every premises with access to superfast broadband by the end of the programme in 2020. (Superfast broadband speed is defined as 30mbps).

There was a detailed discussion about the government's aspirations to provide basic broadband and the wide differences in speeds available to some people. 'Basic' broadband was defined as 2mbps which all should have had by 2016 but it seems that some still do not get this. Ben said that it is hoped that by 2020 you will have a legal right to at least 10mbps and that Shropshire's aspiration is far greater at 30mbps.

The Airband system was described, explaining that it works on line of sight with the transmitters. The 75 feet high Airband mast serving Whixall is situated just outside the parish (at 'Oaklands') and is due to 'go live' in spring this year.

There was a series of challenging questions to Ben from members of the public and the Parish Council with regard to the reliability, cost and longevity of the Airband programme in particular but also the promises made by Connecting Shropshire were challenged. Technical details about the mast and the transmitters were discussed but in response to the question "Will we get 30mbps with Airband?" the meeting was assured by Ben that "yes" they would. There was a concern that Airband is not 'futureproof' and that the investment should be focussed on 'fibre to property' or 'Gfast'.

Ben suggested that a representative from Airband is invited to a future meeting after the service goes live and provided the Clerk with details of a contact.

04/18 Public Participation

Chairman, Cllr Mercer invited the Cadman's to speak about the recurring issue of flooding in the fields at Moss Lane which is, again, encroaching on their property:

Mr Cadman addressed the Parish Council and thanked them for the ongoing support but explained that they were in attendance to report that the water levels had again reached high levels and that they were seeking a solution to the problem which is thought to be a blockage downstream. (It was noted that the canal leak that was previously contributing to the high levels has been addressed). Shropshire Council's Flood and Water Management team are aware of the situation but action has not been swift. Cllr Mellings shared the details of what action has taken place to date. It was agreed that another meeting with residents and the appropriate authorities would be beneficial to help speed up action to address this matter.

It was wondered whether there could be a way of raising the level of the Cadman's garden to avoid the repeated damage.

Cllr Mercer invited S Grogan to address the council on the other matter of flooding that took place over the Christmas period affecting the Social Centre car park and also gave the opportunity for him to refer to letters requesting financial support towards the car park resurfacing and the community project to provide a defibrillator:

S Grogan, Chairman of the Social Centre Committee, explained that the car park had flooded due to the ditch behind the Social Centre being blocked, causing nearly half of the car park to be underwater. Although it is unclear as to who is responsible for the ditch, the Social Centre Committee would like to take positive action to address the matter and get an inspection chamber installed. Cllr Mellings informed the meeting that the Flood and Water Management team had visited the site, albeit after the water had receded, but will let Steve know when another site meeting is arranged.

S Grogan made reference to the requests for the financial support (to be considered later in the meeting) and made a case on behalf of the Social Centre and the need to resurface part of the car park and on behalf of Carole Newey (James) who has initiated the project to install a defibrillator.

05/18 Defibrillator Fund raising event- To consider financial contribution towards the Defibrillator

It was agreed to consider this request alongside other requests later in the meeting.

06/18 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests and requests for dispensation

Members were reminded of their obligation to declare any interests. None declared.

07/18 Minutes of the monthly meeting held on 8th November 2017

It was proposed by Cllr Harris that the draft minutes, of the meeting detailed above, were an accurate record. This was seconded by Cllr Edgerton and agreed by all present.

It was resolved that the minutes of 8 th November 2017 be signed by the Chair as an accurate record of the meeting.

08/18 Clerk's Report

The Clerk provided the following information:

- Two letters of resignation have been received from S Marlow and J Spenser respectively. The letters were given to Chairman Cllr Mercer who opened and read them. Cllr Mercer proposed that letters be sent thanking them for their service and contribution. He acknowledged the length of time that Jen Spenser in particular had been a councillor (since 2006). This was agreed by all.
- As a result of the above resignations; public notice of the vacancies will be given in line with the proper procedures.
- Proposed road closures: Councillors were asked if there were any concerns or queries relating to the upcoming closures. It was asked if more details of where work is taking place could be requested.

- Parish meeting: Councillors were asked to give some thought to the date of the Parish meeting with the view to agreeing the date at the next meeting.
- Shropshire Council Planning Services has issued some information about application types and commenting. This has been shared with councillors.
- Neighbourhood Fund: Advice has been sought from our Community Liaison Officer as to whether all or part of the Neighbourhood Fund can be granted to the Social Centre towards the resurfacing of the car park. The answer is 'yes'.
- Receipt of notification of a new planning enforcement case.
- Request from parishioner to request grit bins are refilled.
- Noted that there has been no further correspondence relating to the renewal of the bowling club lease. The Clerk highlighted that the recent resignations may have implications.
- The Clerk shared the notification for nomination of Chair to be entered into the draw to attend the annual Garden Party at Buckingham Palace.
- The Clerk shared the letters from Rt Hon Owen Paterson MP in response to letter sent on 6th November 2017 Re: The Issue and Use of Section 19 and Section 22 Permits for Road Passenger Transport in Great Britain.
- Starks Bridge has been replaced and has reopened to pedestrians etc.

09/18 **Parish Matters**

To consider action relating to:

- a) Flooding- Review of current situation. Addressed in public session.
- b) Senior Citizens' party- Review of 2017 event and planning for 2018. It was resolved to take this item to a future agenda.
- c) WW1 Beacons of Light Tribute. November 2018- Arrange a planning meeting. The Clerk asked for permission to go ahead with the organisation of a preliminary meeting: Agreed.
- d) Marlot- Grazing update and Annual Report. It is considered that the grazing of cattle on the Marlot has been a success. There have been no reported issues with the cattle, in fact only positive comments have been received. The cattle have done a good job and have now been removed from the site, as has the temporary electric fencing. The Clerk shared with the council the annual report from Martin Spenser of works completed and hours spent in 2017 at the Marlot. It was acknowledged that the vast majority of the 200 plus hours have been given voluntarily by Martin with help from Natural England volunteers and Marlot Conservation Group volunteers.
Cllr Mercer thanked all involved and Cllr Harris proposed that Martin be invited to submit a claim for expenses accrued from his work on The Marlot. This was seconded by Cllr Edgerton and agreed by all.
- e) Community Concern- Speed limit. The Clerk confirmed that she would submit the community concern before February as per Shropshire Council's Road Safety policy guidelines.
- f) Maintenance of Community assets. There is further work to be done to finish painting the railings at the war memorial (Katie) and the phone box in Welsh End (Cllr Harris) but it was acknowledged that appropriate weather was needed to complete the tasks.
- g) West Mercia Police budget and council tax consultation. A Cllr asked whether it is likely that there will be any increased policing in the area in connection with the increased council tax. The Clerk had contacted local and PCSO invited his comment but had not received reply to date. It was suggested and agreed that the police should be invited to the Parish Meeting.

10/18 **Planning**

-All planning applications and decisions can be tracked on line at www.shropshire.gov.uk

Applications received- to consider response

- a) Re-consultation due to Amendment on application 17/05492/FUL - Land Adj To Browns Of Wem
Proposal: Change of use and conversion of former show home bungalow to residential dwelling.

The following response to application Ref: 17/05492/FUL was **RESOLVED**:

Stance: OBJECT

Comment: Whixall Parish Council agrees with the pre-application advice given by Shropshire Council Officer (development is contrary to CS5 and Whixall's Open Countryside designation).

- b) Re-consultation due to Amendment on application 17/03033/FUL - Proposed Holiday Cabins To The East Of Post Office Lane.
Proposal: Proposed siting of 4No. holiday cabins including change of use of land and the formation of a commercial fishing pool and the formation of a vehicular access (part retrospective).
It was **RESOLVED** not to respond to this re-consultation.

To receive any updates on planning enforcements:

- c) Ref: 14/00834/FUL- Reported breach of conditions. No further update.
d) Ref: 17/05551/ENF - Reported unauthorised development. The Clerk has been informed that no action had been taken on this but correspondence had been sent to land owner on 10th January.

To receive planning application decisions:

- e) Reference: 17/03095/FUL - Conversion of redundant agricultural barn to residential dwelling, formation of vehicular access and installation of septic tank at proposed dwelling NE Of Four Lane Ends Farm, Whixall, Shropshire. Decision: Refuse

11/18 **Financial Matters**

- a) To receive monthly bank balance record.
The Clerk advised the council of the council's bank balances. The amounts stated in the Monthly Balance Records for November and December 2017 were countersigned by Cllr Mercer as accurate with the bank statements.

DATE	ACCOUNT NAME	AMOUNT
29 th December 2017	Community Account	£7,235.34
	Business Saver Account	£924.10
TOTAL		£8,159.44

- b) To receive 3rd quarterly expenditure report.
Confirmed by all present that it had been received and noted.
- c) To receive working budget update.
Confirmed by all present that it had been received and noted.
- d) To consider and agree precept request to Shropshire Council.
Following considered debate which reflected on the expected annual 'cost of living' increase, Cllr Edgerton proposed a fifty pence increase per year per band D household which equates to a 2.23% increase. Seconded by Cllr Howard and agreed by all. **RESOLVED that a total precept of £7,708.00 would be requested.** Chairman Cllr Mercer signed the appropriate paperwork.
- e) To consider requests for financial donations: The Clerk read the written requests received. After some consideration Cllr Mercer proposed that the Parish Council will agree in principle to contribute to all but will debate exact amounts at the next meeting, seconded by Cllr Harris and agreed by all.
- f) To resolve to approve outstanding accounts.
Orders for the payment of money (listed on following page). As per the financial report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)/ Clerk were proposed by Cllr Mercer, seconded by Cllr Harris and agreed by all present. **RESOLVED.**
N.B. Prior approval for reimbursements of party costs and other outstanding invoices had been given at last meeting on 8th November (Minute ref: 135/17c). The list to follow confirms actual cheque numbers and amounts.

DATE	CHEQUE NO.	DETAILS	AMOUNT	LEGAL POWER TO SPEND
8 th Dec 2017	101163	Aaron William Evans- party entertainer	£45.00	LGA 1972 s. 137
18 th Dec 2017	101164	J Hardiman- party food and consumables reimburse	£89.54	
10 th January 2018	101165	J Spenser- party food (meat) reimburse	£125.00	
	101166	I Mercer- party drinks reimburse	£31.44	LGA 1972 s.112(2)
	101167	K Hatton- Clerk's pay for November and December plus additional hours	£697.80	
	101168	SJF Design and Print- Newsletter print	£72.00	LGA 1972 s.142 (1A)
	101169	K Hatton- Railing paint reimburse	£32.79	WM(LAP)A10923 s.1/ LGA 1948 s.133(2)
	101170	C Jones- Grass cutting	£60.00	HA 1980 s.96
	101171	K Hatton- party consumables reimburse	£8.59	LGA 1972 s. 137
TOTAL			£1,162.16	

LGA= Local Government Act

HA= Highways Act

TA=Transport Act

CA=Commons Act

Resolved: The outstanding accounts should be paid and the cheques signed by two authorised councillors.

12/18 Highways

- a) Referrals to Shropshire Council:
 Green Lane/ Goblins Lane junction- Shropshire Council officer was due to investigate but update not received. Cllr Edgerton offered to help and liaise with SC on the matter.
 Church Lane and Social Centre car park- referred to Land Drainage team.
 Road verges- have been reported to Highways.
 HGV's on Platt Lane and Roundthorn bridges incident has been reported to Highways and Canal and River Trust. Clerk was asked to request 'unsuitable for HGV' signs to be installed.
- b) Scheduled works by Shropshire Council- Planned road closures to be posted on website.

13/18 Councillors Reports

- a) Parish Councillors:

-Cllr Mercer advised the Clerk to contact Wem Town Clerk re: bespoke training for the new data Protection Regulations.

- b) Shropshire Councillors:

-Cllr Mellings had distributed a detailed written report to Cllrs prior to the meeting via email, providing updates on the following current key issues: Flooding, Planning, Stark's Bridge (has been re-opened), Car Parking Strategy, Fire Governance, Universal Credit, Cabinet and full council issues, Cllr Mellings also listed other information that he had shared since the last meeting.

14/18 Consider future agenda items

Consider donations, Parish meeting date, Airband presentation.

Scheduled date of next meeting: **Wednesday 14th February 2018 at 7.30 pm**

The meeting closed at 9.55pm